



The Story of Dulwich



Front Cover:

A corner of Dulwich Village, a watercolour from the collection at the South London Art Gallery.

Painted by R. V. Russell

Back Cover: Stanford's Library map of London and its suburbs.
Sheet 19. 1862.

FOREWORD

This booklet is a brief, simple introduction to the history of one part of the London Borough of Southwark. It is written mainly for readers whose homes or schools are in the Dulwich and East Dulwich neighbourhood.

Some suggestions for further reading are given at the end of each chapter, the emphasis being on recent and popularly written books and pamphlets. Most are available at or through any Southwark library and are also in print. Anyone wishing to make a more detailed or advanced study should visit the Southwark Local Studies Library, 211 Borough High Street, London SE1, Tel: 01-403 3507. This has a comprehensive collection of books, maps, illustrations, press-cuttings, archives, and microfilms (of census returns, local newspapers etc.) covering all parts of the London Borough of Southwark. The opening hours may be obtained from any library. An appointment in advance is helpful, and is essential for consultation of the archives, use of a microfilm reader, or for school party visits.

CONTENTS

Foreword

Map

1. A thousand years of history
2. Fields and woods
3. Old roads and road signs
4. Edward Alleyn, Dulwich College and the Alleyn Foundation
5. The old village
6. Inns and pleasure grounds
7. Great houses and who lived in them
8. Dulwich Picture Gallery
9. Writers and artists
10. The last of the farms; Dulwich & East Dulwich
11. The age of the train
12. Victorian Dulwich – the College Estates
13. East Dulwich takes shape
14. Churches and other important buildings of East Dulwich
15. Dulwich in two World Wars
16. Dulwich today

KEY TO MAP

1. The Fox on the Hill.
2. Site of Bessemer House.
3. Bessemer Grange Library.
4. Dulwich Hospital. (marked twice on map because of two sites)
5. Grove Vale Library.
6. Dulwich Baths.
7. St. John's Church, Goose Green.
8. Amott Road Baptist Church.
9. Site of Casino House.
10. Dulwich Grove United Reformed Church.
11. Dulwich Police Station.
12. Lordship Lane Baptist Church.
13. Site of Friern Manor House.
14. St. Clement's Church.
15. St. Paul's Church.
16. The Half Moon Hotel.
17. Herne Hill Baptist Church.
18. St. Barnabas Church.
19. The Old Burial Ground.
20. The Crown and Greyhound.
21. The Plough.
22. Christ Church.
23. Dulwich Library.
24. St. Thomas More Church.
25. The Old Grammar School.
26. The Old College.



1. A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY

The busy main road, now called Dulwich Village, was, and still is, the High Street of the village of Dulwich. If you stand outside the Old College and look up the street you can see that Dulwich is still more like a village than most places so near to London. Beautiful trees and green grass line the road. There are small shops and an old signpost and milestone. Not far away are fields and woods. You can imagine the scene, not so many years ago, when, instead of fast cars, sheep and cows ambled along the peaceful village street.

Dulwich is, in fact, one of the oldest recorded villages in London. Now that it is a built-up area it is difficult to picture the lie of the land which might have attracted its first residents. Dulwich and East Dulwich cover a fertile valley between hills, Denmark Hill and Dog Kennel Hill to the north, Sydenham Hill and One Tree Hill, Honor Oak, to the south. If you explore on foot rather than by car or bus you will soon know where the rising ground begins! The name of Dulwich may be a clue to what the neighbourhood was like in the distant past. It has been spelt in various ways, Dilwihs, Dylways, Dullag, and may come from two old English words, Dill, a white flower, and wihs, meaning a damp meadow. Dulwich was 'the meadow where dill grows'.

There may have been a prehistoric or Roman fort on one of the surrounding hills, that known in the past as Primrose Hill or Ladlands, now Overhill Road. Manning and Bray, authors of a *History of Surrey*, published 1814, thought they could make out an oblong fortification enclosed within a double ditch. The Dawson's Heights flats are built on what used to be called Hilly Camp Field. If you live in one of them you can imagine what a wonderful look-out place this would have been.

The first written record of Dulwich is in a charter of the Anglo-Saxon King Eadgar, who granted it, with other lands, to his faithful earl, Aelfheah, and Aelfswith, his wife, in the year 967. A 14th century copy of the charter is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. In 1967 there were celebrations to mark the Dulwich Millennium, the fact that Dulwich was at least one thousand years old.



Dulwich Village, c.1905

In the Middle Ages the Manor of Dulwich belonged to Bermondsey Abbey, the great religious house on the site of Tower Bridge Road and Abbey Street. It was given to the Abbey in 1127 by King Henry I. In 1605 the Manor was bought by Edward Alleyn. Since then it has had just one ground landlord, the college which he founded; a fact which greatly affected its development.

Although the Manor of Dulwich is now part of the huge built-up area of South London it still has its own boundaries. If you wonder where they are, amidst all the surrounding streets, you can trace them by the old boundary stones on Champion Hill, Ruskin walk and Sydenham Hill. Croxted Road is on the line of one branch of the little river Effra, which marked the western boundary of the Manor. There is still a ditch behind the back gardens. The stream, which rose in Upper Norwood, and flowed into the Thames at Vauxhall, has become one of London's underground rivers, remembered only in the name Effra Road. Another type of boundary mark, the Vicar's Oak, on the top of Sydenham Hill, has long since vanished.

To the East of the Manor of Dulwich is East Dulwich which also has a history going back to the Middle Ages. The name occurs in a deed of about 1300 which is in the Dulwich College archives, though the position and boundaries of East Dulwich at that time are not clear. The will of John Scott, Lord of the Manor of Camberwell, who died in 1558, mentions 'a messuage (house and land) in East Dulwich, alias Peckham Rye'.

Much of East Dulwich was in the Manor of Friern, remembered in the street-name, Friern Road. In the Middle Ages this manor belonged to the convent of Halliwell, Shoreditch. As Halliwell was a house of nuns, probably lay-brothers, or 'freren', managed the manor and that is how it got its name. Friern Manor House was where Friern Road now crosses Underhill Road. Part of Lordship Lane was the boundary between Dulwich and Friern manors, lordship being another word for manor.

References and further reading

1. Brian Green - *Dulwich Village*, Village Books, 1981, revised 1983, chap.1
Brian Green *Around Dulwich*, Village Books, 1982, chap. 1
Two important and well-illustrated recent books.
2. Rosemary J Warhurst - *A View of Dulwich, Peckham and Camberwell around 1300*, publ. privately, 1985, pp. 6,9,&23
A book based on early documents.
3. John Rocque - *Map of London and 10 miles round, 1741-1745*
The earliest map of the Dulwich neighbourhood.
4. Douglas Allport - *Camberwell*, publ. privately, 1841, pp. 29-40.

2. FIELDS AND WOODS

What was life like in Dulwich, hundreds of years ago? It was a quiet place then, just a few houses, in the midst of fields. People worked in the fields growing corn that was ground into flour at the mill. One Dulwich mill, set up by Edward Alleyn, was where Dulwich College now stands. The pond across the road is still called the Mill Pond. It was a post-mill; the sails were mounted on a post which could be turned according to the wind.

Dulwich Common is now only the name of a busy main road, part of the South Circular, but, until it was enclosed in 1805, the common was a wide open space; land where sheep and cows could graze.

Court Lane led to Dulwich Court. The Lord of the Manor, or his steward, held court to settle disputes or try people who had done something wrong. From 1333 the steward kept notes, in Latin, on rolls of parchment. These Court Rolls are preserved at Dulwich College and give some idea of life on the manor many centuries ago. For example, in 1333 William Colyn was fined three pence because his pigs got into the lord's field. In 1440 Julian Fahrher was brought to court because she did not come at harvest time to help gather the lord's oats. Sometimes a real crime was reported. In 1334 Richard Rolf said that William Hosewood 'at Dylwysh' had carried off Edith, his wife, together with one cow worth ten shillings, clothes, jewels and other goods.

The footpath opposite Pickwick Cottage, leading from College Road to Gallery Road, goes past fields, called *Howlets* in the Statutes of Edward Alleyn, which have never been built on. Elsewhere early field-names, for example, *Blanchedowne*, *Woodfarrs* and *Gylcote*, have been reused for modern developments. *Blanchedowne* goes back at least to 1399. *Ryecotes* or *Rygates*, Dulwich Common, was part of the lands owned by Edward Alleyn. A primary school is named after the *Langbourne*, a long stretch of water mentioned in the Court Rolls of 1402. *Howlett's Road*, comes from *Howlett's Acre*. In 1626 Sir Edmond Bowyer willed that the rents from this land be paid every year, on Good Friday, to the poor of Camberwell. One of the boundary stones of *Howlett's Acre* is in the garden behind flats at the corner of Elmwood Road and Half Moon Lane. *Dunstan's Herne*, a field mentioned in a deed of 1700, gave its name to Dunstan's Road. *Hoop Petticoat Field*, marked on an old plan of Friern Manor, at the junction of Wood Vale and Lordship Lane, is a name that has been lost!

South of Dulwich was the Great North Wood stretching north from Croydon to Honor Oak. Dulwich Woods are part that remains of this ancient forest. It is remembered also in names such as Norwood, Kingswood and Forest Hill. The woods were once useful to Dulwich villagers. Their houses were built of wood. You can still see a few timber built houses in Dulwich, two to three hundred years old: *Bell Cottage*, College Road and Nos 4-10 Pond Cottages. Wood fires also warmed the houses and cooked the meals. In the Middle Ages villagers claimed the right to take any necessary fuel from the woods and also 'hedgebote' or stakes for making fences and hedges. Edward Alleyn managed the woods in a business-like way, dividing them into ten sections or 'coppices', one coppice to be felled each year, when the trees were ten years old. *Peckarman's Wood*, now a housing estate, was one of these coppices.

References and further reading

1. William Darby - *Dulwich discovered*, publ. privately, 1966, chap. 2
William Darby - *Dulwich a place in history*, publ. privately, 1967, p.25-28
Two books based on Dulwich College archives.
2. London Wildlife Trust - *Sydenham Hill Wood Nature Trail*, 1986
Ecological Parks Trust - *Dulwich Upper Wood Site Guide*, 1986
John Archer & others - *Nature conservation in Southwark*, London Ecology Unit, 1989.
3. L.S.C. Neville - *The Great North Wood*, London Wildlife Trust, 1987.
For further study
4. *Dulwich Society Newsletters*, 1970 to date.
The Dulwich Villager; St. Barnabas Parish Magazine, 1955 to date.
Publications with good historical articles, filed in the Local Studies Library.
5. *Abstract of title of the British Land Company's Friern Manor Farm Estate*, 1865. Southwark Archives, Deed No. 634.

3. OLD ROADS AND ROAD SIGNS

'The hamlet of Dulwich, formerly spelt Dilwysshe is near two miles from Camberwell – The situation is pleasant and very retired, no public road passing through it except to the neighbouring hamlet of Sydenham'.

Daniel Lysons – *Environs of London*, Cadell, 1792

In the past just a few very old roads or tracks linked Dulwich Village and East Dulwich with other places. Dog Kennel Lane, now Dog Kennel Hill, and Lordship Lane were part of a main north-south highway, marked on Rocque's Map of 1745. You can see by the way it curves that this is no modern motor route. Croxted Lane, now Croxted Road, was Crokestrete in a document of 1334. It is said to have been part of a route taken by some of the pilgrims to Canterbury.

Travellers coming to Dulwich from London came via Dulwich Hill, now Denmark Hill, and down Aspole Hill, now Red Post Hill. Leading south from Dulwich there was a path through the woods, Penge Lane, now College Road. The only other main route was 'the road from Bristoe Causey' (Brixton Causeway), now Half Moon Lane, leading past Island Green at the foot of Herne Hill.

Apart from these roads there were just foot-paths across the fields. Most have now become built-up roads; the 'Wood Lane' of 1745 is now Wood Vale. A footpath from Goose Green to the Plough has become Crystal Palace Road. But you can still trace a few old paths. At the side of the Plough, Lordship Lane, is the beginning of Plough Lane, which went out of use when Barry Road was built. It even has a small pond with frogs in it!

Dulwich was a 'hamlet', that is a village without its own church. Before the Old College Chapel was built in 1616, and long before St. Barnabas', the people of Dulwich walked on Sundays, by footpaths, over the hill to their parish church, St. Giles' Camberwell. You can follow in their steps. Part of 'Church Path' is now Calton Avenue. Its continuation, 'Green Lane', now Green Dale, is still quite a country lane, though partly made up as a cycle route.

By the 18th century long-distance travel had become a little easier. Turnpike Trusts made up the main roads to London and stage coaches made regular use of them. Travellers by coach or carriage, on foot, or horseback, could look out for various road signs. The author of *A Companion from London to Brighthelmstone* (Brighton), published in 1800, noted a red 'cross of direction', or signpost, at the top of Red Post Hill, pointing the way to Dulwich. This has gone but Dulwich still has many old signposts such as you normally only see nowadays on country roads. The 'fingerposts' are at old road junctions such as, Dulwich Village and Red Post Hill, Dulwich Common and Lordship Lane. The one opposite the Old College Gates has three arms, now pointing to Crystal Palace and Upper Norwood, Dulwich College and Picture Gallery, Denmark Hill and Camberwell.

By the roadside there are milestones set up by Thomas Treslove, Surveyor of Roads, in 1772. One is on Red Post Hill, near North Dulwich Station. The other, much restored, is opposite the Old College Gates. It tells you that you are five miles from the Treasury, Whitehall, and from the Standard, Cornhill, the old water conduit from which distances from the City were measured. On the back

are the Surveyor's initials T.T. and the Latin inscription, 'siste viator', 'rest, traveller'. The fountain nearby, where horses and thirsty travellers could drink, is a memorial to Dr George Webster, founder of the first British Medical Association, who cared for the sick in Dulwich for sixty years, from 1815 until his death in 1875.

Two hundred years ago tolls were charged on most main roads. In 1989 the Dulwich Tollgate, College Road, was the only tollgate still in use in the London area and celebrations marked its 200th anniversary. (At the time of writing its future is uncertain). Unlike most, Dulwich Tollgate was erected not by a Turnpike Trust, but by an individual. John Morgan, Lord of the Manor of Penge, made up the road from the top of the hill to reach some fields he had rented from Dulwich College. In 1789 he was allowed to charge tolls on people passing through his fields. After his death the College kept his tollgate, and his tollgate cottage, and continued to charge tolls for the upkeep of the road.

Scale of Charges

For every horse, mule or donkey drawing any vehicle 6d.

For sheep, lambs or hogs per score 2½d

These are some items (in 'old money') from the board still displayed beside the tollgate. Present-day traffic on this busy road, in 1989, paid 20p for a car and 50p for a lorry. Another tollgate, at the top of Court Lane, was abolished, like most London tollgates, in 1864.

When the Scale of Charges was first set up there was obviously little danger of being run over, but, even then, the roads were not always very safe. 'Footpads' and highwaymen, the muggers of those days, might be lurking, especially on Dulwich Common and on the lonely road from Camberwell to Dulwich. In 1812 a horse patrol was set up to protect travellers on this road. Mr Thomas Redman was appointed and given not only a great coat and hat but also a cutlass and a pair of pistols!



Dulwich Tollgate, c.1905

References and further reading

1. William Harnett Blanch – *Ye Parish of Camberwell*, Allen, 1875. Reprint by Camberwell Society, 1976. p. B1-2, 3B2-5, 393-5.
2. William Darby – *Dulwich a place in history*. See under coach, finger-posts, highwaymen, tollgate and transport.
3. William Darby – *Dulwich discovered*, chap. 11
4. Brian Green – *The Dulwich Tollgate 1789-1989*, leaflet, Dulwich Society, 1989.

4. EDWARD ALLEYN, DULWICH COLLEGE AND THE ALLEYN FOUNDATION

The most important man in Dulwich history was certainly Edward Alleyn, founder of Dulwich College. Who then was Alleyn? He was one of the greatest actors of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, a time of great actors and playwrights, including Shakespeare himself. Born in 1566, the son of an innkeeper in Bishopsgate, at 17 he joined a company of actors. His wife, Joan Woodward, was the step-daughter of Philip Henslowe, owner of the Rose Theatre on Bankside, Southwark; the foundations of which were uncovered by archaeologists in 1989. It was as an actor at the Rose that Alleyn achieved fame. Later he owned the Fortune Theatre in Finsbury and also became Master of the King's Bears. The cruel sport of bear-baiting, putting dogs to fight against bears, with bets on which animal won, was popular, and not considered wrong, in Alleyn's day. Edward Alleyn's portrait and that of his wife are in Dulwich Picture Gallery. Loving letters which he sent her when on tour with the actors are preserved at Dulwich College, together with his diary, and that of Philip Henslowe.

It was in 1605 that Alleyn's association with Dulwich began. He was now a wealthy man and, for £5,000, a large sum in those days, was able to buy the Manor of Dulwich from the Calton family, who had owned it since the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII. In 1612 Alleyn and his wife moved from Bankside to live in Dulwich.

Wanting to do good with the fortune he had made, he decided to build in Dulwich a college which would help both old people and children, a home, as he said, for 'six poor brothers and six poor sisters', and a school for 'twelve poor scholars'. All were to come from four parishes, St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, where he was born, St. Giles', Cripplegate, where his Fortune Theatre was built, St. Saviour's, now Southwark Cathedral, near which he had acted at the Rose and had his Bear Gardens, and St. Giles', Camberwell, which then included Dulwich. His plans were based on similar schemes elsewhere, which he had studied; Winchester College, the Charterhouse foundation in London, and even an old people's home in Amsterdam. On 21st June, 1619, King James I granted Alleyn a royal charter for his College. It is preserved at Dulwich College and 21st June is celebrated each year as Founder's Day.

Alleyn laid down various rules for the College. The boys began school at six to eight years old and could stay until they were eighteen. Many children had no chance of an education in those days so there was competition to be chosen as a 'poor scholar'. When two boys had been selected they had to draw lots. The one who chose the paper with 'God's gift' written on it had a place at 'The College of God's Gift in Dulwich'. No charge was made for the 'poor scholars'. Other boys could attend the school by paying fees. One curious rule said that future Masters of the College should not be married but should have the surname Alleyn (or Allen).

During the Civil War a detachment of Roundhead soldiers were quartered on the College, but, apart from this, Dulwich College continued fairly peacefully and little changed for over 200 years. Even today the Old College still stands in the centre of Dulwich. Over the entrance gates is the coat of arms which Alleyn took from his mother's family, the Townleys; though the gates have been brought forward, as what is now the garden was once Dulwich village green. The Old College has been much rebuilt over the years but the shape of it, on three sides of a courtyard, is the same as in Alleyn's day.

In the centre is the Old College Chapel, provided by Alleyn for the College and the people of Dulwich. Above the entrance is a Latin inscription about Edward Alleyn, ending, 'Blessed is he who has taken pity on the poor. Go thou and do likewise' – 'Abi tu et fac similiter'. Alleyn's tomb is in the floor in front of the altar. The reredos, behind the altar, erected in 1911, shows two 'poor scholars', as attendants to the Three Kings. They are dressed in the school uniform of Alleyn's day. One is holding a model of the college and the other a cornflower, emblem of the Foundation. At services in the Chapel a prayer is said giving 'humble and hearty thanks for the memory in this place of Edward Alleyn, our Founder and Benefactor'.

The east wing of the Old College, Edward Alleyn House, is still used as almshouses, homes for old people, as Alleyn wished. The west wing, however, is now the office of the Estates Governors who manage the land owned by the College. The school which began here 370 years ago grew so much that it has long since left this small building. It moved in 1870 from the Old College to magnificent Victorian buildings in College Road. Dulwich College has become one of the famous public schools of this country.



The Old College, Dulwich Village, 1792

The Alleyn Foundation had been reorganised by Act of Parliament in 1857. Instead of Alleyn's '12 poor scholars' it now provides not only for Dulwich College but also for two other big schools in Dulwich, each of which has a history of its own. One is James Allen's Girls' School. This was founded originally by James Allen, Master of the College 1721-46, as a 'Reading School' for poor children in Dulwich. Unlike the College it was for girls as well as boys. The girls learnt to sew as well as to read! Classes were held in the *French Horn Inn*, across the road from the Old College. A plaque on the house *Rokeby* near Dulwich Park gates, marks the site. In 1857 the school became 'J.A.G.S.', a school for girls only. In 1866 J.A.G.S. moved to the building which is now Dulwich Hamlet School and in 1886 to East Dulwich Grove.

The third school under the Foundation is Alleyn's, which also began as a small school. People had begun to complain that the Old College was not doing enough for education, so, in 1842, it founded an additional school for sixty boys. The building, at the corner of 8urbage Road and Gallery Road, is still known as 'the Old Grammar School'. This school grew enormously and moved in 1887 to become Alleyn's School, Townley Road. Since 1975 Alleyn's has taken both boys and girls.

Thanks to Alleyn then, Dulwich became noted for education. But thanks to him also, though he could not have foreseen this, Dulwich has remained more green and unspoilt, more like a village, than almost anywhere in inner London. To provide for all its good work Alleyn gave the Manor of Dulwich to the College he had founded. He had secured not just the manorial rights but the freehold of nearly all the land and Dulwich College kept the ownership of this large area of land stretching from Champion Hill to Sydenham Hill almost down to the present day. It controlled development, prohibited sub-letting and made rules to regulate building and protect trees, which preserved the character of Dulwich. Even though people who live in Dulwich have had the right, since 1967, to buy the freehold of their houses, they are still bound by a Scheme of Management drawn up by the College authorities.

References and further reading

1. Brian Green – *Dulwich Village* pp. 16-29, 44-48
2. *Scenes from the Past Ser. 1., no.11 Dulwich College 1776*, L.8. Southwark
One of a number of early prints, with notes, on sale at Southwark Local Studies Library
3. *Dulwich; a collection of writing about the Village and the College*, Dulwich College, 1969. pp. 1-8, 31-34, 43-47
For more detailed study
4. Sheila Hodges – *God's Gift; a living history of Dulwich College*, Heinemann, 1981
5. Arthur R. Chandler – *Alleyn's*, Skilton, 1983.
6. M.A. Wren and P. Hackett – *James Allen*, publ. privately, 196B
7. Brian Green – *History of education in Dulwich 1619-1882* Unpublished thesis, 1988. Copy in Local Studies Library.

There are also many older works on Alleyn and Dulwich College

5. THE OLD VILLAGE

'The merchants and rich traders of the City of London availing themselves of the beautiful situations which are found here have built a great many good houses'.

Owen Manning and William Bray – *History of Surrey*, White, 1804

Dulwich Village is a Conservation Area. Many of its buildings take you back in time at least 200 years. At the centre is, of course, the Old College of Edward Alleyn. Elegant Georgian houses line part of the street leading to it. They were built at a time when better roads and transport had made it possible for professional and business men to live away from their work in central London. No. 57 next to the Old Burial Ground, still has a big brick coach house, built no doubt for the owner's private horse-drawn coach, but now converted into garages. Other genuine eighteenth-century houses include, Nos. 59, 97 and 101-105, Nos. 60-62 and also Nos. 13 and 15 College Road.

These large houses, with their fine entrances, have obviously always been the homes of well-to-do people. More ordinary Dulwich residents might have lived in cottages, such as Nos. 70-78 Dulwich Village, all built between 1765 and 1837. Homes of the very poorest have gone, though records show there were some of these, even in Dulwich. The Dulwich Local Charities Annual Report, 1859-60, mentions the distribution of flannel and coals to the poor because of the 'peculiar severity of last winter'.

The shops of Dulwich Village are fairly small, not like the self-service supermarkets of a modern shopping centre. Except for the goods on sale, many are comparatively little changed since Dulwich really was a village. Some of the cottages just mentioned have long been small shops and others once were, as you can see by the boards above the ground-floor windows which used to carry the shopkeeper's name. Across the road, what is now the Post Office, used to be the villager baker's. There has been a grocer's at No.91 since at least 1812. If you look above the modern shop-fronts you can see that Nos. 77-89 are all old buildings. Nos. 25-49 Dulwich Village are not quite so old. This is a Victorian shopping centre, known as Commerce Place. In the days before tap-water, there was a long pond on this site, a reservoir for the village and a place for cattle and horses to drink. It was probably constructed when James Allen was Master of the College. The shops were built after 1860 when the pond was filled in.

In the past most things needed by the villagers were produced in the neighbourhood. Food came mainly from the local farms. Even in the High Street pigs and chickens were kept in back gardens. In 1804 a lady at No. 57 assured the college that her pigs were not getting into the Old Burial Ground from her yard, as she had made a sliding door which would not slide up more than seven inches – allowing only her chickens to get in! The beautiful green verges, separated from the road by white posts and chains, are a special feature of Dulwich. Originally they were part of the 'manor wastes', or common land, which could be used for grazing. There was a pound for stray animals at the junction of Court Lane and Calton Avenue.

The butchers kept their cattle in the fields, which are now sports grounds, between Gallery Road and Burbage Road. There was a pond at the corner, known as Butcher's Pond. There were at least two butchers' shops. Before

refrigeration, the projecting canopy of No. 84 Dulwich Village would have shaded meat from the summer sun. Mr. Sperring, the butcher, could drive his bullocks from the fields, up the High Street to the slaughterhouse behind his shop, a building which is now part of Park Motors. The London Steak House and Dulwich World Travel occupy an exact copy of an old building which was another butcher's shop.

In the days when all road transport was horse-drawn, coaches and wheels were made at what is now Park Motors. No. 70 Dulwich Village, now a Health and Beauty shop, was Flashman's, the village saddler's. Across the road, the sparks flew when the blacksmith was shoeing horses at his forge in Calton Avenue, near where the Gallery Bookshop is today.

Clothes were not bought ready-made but were made for each customer. The shoemaker's was at No. 78 Dulwich Village, now Fordham's electrical shop, and the tailor's was next door. There was once a dress-making business at Ash Cottage, No. 1 Court Lane, a house built in 1814.

Pond Cottages, College Road, with their pretty front gardens, are the sort of houses you see on greetings cards, most people's dream of an ideal home. When they were built, however, perhaps 300 years ago, they were a centre of industry. Clay was dug from Dulwich Common and there was a kiln in the back-yard to make roof tiles. The Cottages still have tile roofs. In the 18th century bricks, and probably chimney pots, for Dulwich's Georgian houses were made here. The windmill across the road, on the site of Dulwich College, was known as Breekill Mill, probably meaning Brick Kiln Mill.

Essential services as well as goods, were provided within the village. If a house caught fire, the bell in the turret of Bell House, College Road, was rung and also the College Chapel bell, and men would rush to get out the 'fire engine', a barrow with a hose pipe, from the engine-house, which was near the Old Burial Ground, and drag it to the Butcher's Pond to fill it with water. The College and residents of larger houses, however, did not rely entirely on this. They insured against fire, as householders do today, but, as there was no London Fire Brigade, the insurance companies sent their own fire engines, drawn along by galloping horses. To make sure the firemen knew which property was insured householders put a lead plaque on the wall. An old 'firemark' of the Sun Fire Insurance Company may still be seen over the doorway of 15, College Road.



*No. 70 Dulwich Village, 1931
with the London Explorers' Club*

Petty crime could also be dealt with locally. In a small garden near the petrol station in Calton Avenue there is an old stone with the date 1760 and the words 'It is a sport to a fool to do mischief-Thine own wickedness shall correct thee'. Once it was part of a small 'cage', or prison, where offenders could be locked up until brought to trial. Nearby, at the junction of 'High Street' and 'Church Path', others who had done wrong would be sitting with their feet in the stocks, jeered at by passers-by.

Finally, when villagers died, they could find their last resting-place in Dulwich. The Old Burial Ground was given to the people of Dulwich for this purpose by Edward Alleyn. Its beautiful 18th-century gates are of Sussex Iron. From Court Lane you can read the names of some who are buried here.

References and further reading

1. William Darby – *Dulwich discovered*, chap. 12
2. William Darby – *Dulwich a place in history*, p.39-40
3. Brian Green *Dulwich Village*, p. 5-12, 37-41
4. Dept of the Environment – *List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest; Southwark*
5. Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner – *Buildings of England; London 2: South*, Penguin, 1983, p. 633-636
6. For further research –
Records of the Dulwich Local Charities and Dulwich Infants' School 1860-1947
Deposited in the Southwark Archives. (MS 1984/255)

6. INNS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

Everyone knows the *Crown* and *Greyhound*, the popular pub and meeting-place in Dulwich Village. Its curious sign takes you back in history to two of the oldest inns of Dulwich. One was the *Crown*, on this same site, a small weather-boarded building, where farm labourers could call in for a drink after their work in the fields. The *Plough*, Lordship Lane, was once very similar. Its sign reminds you of those days.

The gentlemen who lived in the elegant houses of Dulwich preferred the *Greyhound* which was across the road from the *Crown*, and the largest inn in the village. Balls were held here and the Dulwich Club, founded in 1772, used to meet here for grand dinners. Items on the menu for 21st December 1782, included 'hunting pudding', 'turtle supe' and 'mins pys'. Charles Dickens and other famous people came to the Dulwich Club dinners. The *Greyhound* probably got its name from the hounds used in hunting. Another old inn was the *Fox under the Hill*, described as 'an ancient public house' in 1789.

The inns were especially busy before the railway came, when they were the stopping places for stage-coaches. The coach from Sevenoaks to Piccadilly called daily at the *Greyhound*, which had stabling for fifteen horses and six coaches. From the *French Horn* a coach ran twice daily to Gracechurch Street in the City. The coachman sounding the horn as he set out probably gave the inn its name. In 1830 coaches started running regularly from the *Plough*. Later it was a bus-stop for horse-buses. You can still stand on the stone 'setts', or paving blocks, where they used to pull up.

Before motor transport, outings from London were to nearby places, such as Dulwich. Families liked to come to the *Greyhound* for the day because at the back of the inn there were tea-gardens and two cricket fields and even a menagerie with a bear. The old *Half Moon*, Herne Hill, also had large tea-gardens.

Some of the old inns are now no more. The *French Horn* was later used for a school and was finally demolished in 1889. The *Greyhound* came to an end in 1898. It was demolished and Pickwick Road built on the site. But at least its name continues. The *Crown* was rebuilt as a much larger building and combined the signs of the two old inns to become the *Crown and Greyhound*. The *Half Moon* was rebuilt in 1896. The *Plough*, as it is today, is a Victorian building. After World War II the *Fox* was rebuilt, higher up Denmark Hill, so it became the *Fox on the Hill*.

In the 18th century one of the old Dulwich inns had special attractions. This was the *Green Man*, Dulwich Common, where the *Grove Tavern* or *Harvester Steak House* now stands. About 1704 the innkeeper, John Cox, got permission to cut a walk through the woods, opposite his inn. It is still called Cox's Walk. That was in the days when fashionable ladies and gentlemen flocked to 'spas', or mineral springs, to 'take to the waters', for the good of their health. Cox's Walk would have been a short cut from the wells, or spa, in what is now Sydenham Wells Park. In 1739, however, John Cox's son dug a well, sixty feet deep, in the grounds of his own inn, and discovered his own mineral spring. Crowds came, not only to drink the waters from 'Dulwich Spa', but to enjoy many entertainments at the *Green Man*, where Mr Cox had 'a room for breakfasts and dancing' and a bowling-green.



The Plough, Lordship Lane, c.1907

Later, the inn was replaced by a school, Dr Glennie's Academy. Its most famous pupil was Lord Byron, the future poet, who was there in 1799-1801, before going on to Harrow. Byron and his young friends sometimes got up to mischief, playing at highwaymen and telling passers by to 'Stand and deliver'. But he was a great reader, especially of history and poetry, so perhaps what he learnt in Dulwich helped him later to become a writer himself. After Dr Glennie's time, the school was demolished and a Mr Bew had tea-gardens on what became known for a time as Bew's Corner'. The *Grove Tavern* opened in 1863. It was rebuilt in 1923.

References and further reading

1. W. H. Blanch – *Ye Parish of Camberwell* p. 368-70 and p. 386-92
2. Brian Green – *Dulwich Village*, p. 13-15 and p. 35-7

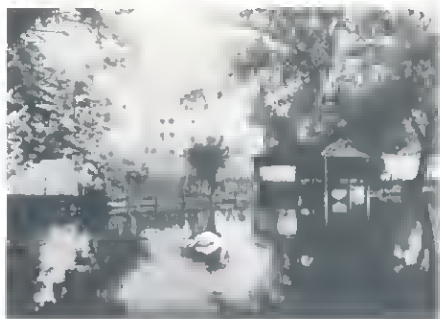
7. GREAT HOUSES AND WHO LIVED IN THEM

Belair in Gallery Road, is a good place to spend a summer's afternoon. The 18th-century mansion, the peaceful grounds, and well-kept lawns sloping down to the long lake, make it easy to imagine you are far from London, or back in the days when this was the private country estate of a wealthy family.

The house was built about 1785 for John Willes, cornfactor of Whitechapel, and was known in his time as *College Place*. The lake was mentioned by Willes when first leasing the land from Dulwich College. It used to be thought that it was a branch of the River Effra, but recent research has tended to disprove this. The next long-term resident of the house was Charles Ranken, solicitor, who renamed it *Belair*. Additions to the building were necessary when Charles Hutton, wool merchant, and Sheriff for London and Middlesex, lived here with his wife, eleven of their children, and ten living-in servants! Eventually *Belair* had forty-seven rooms – very much bigger than it is today.

It remained a private house until 1938, the last resident being Sir Evan Spicer of Spicer's, the paper merchants. In his time *Belair* still had a farm with cows, pigs, chickens, ducks and horses, including a grey carthorse called Dobbin. It had vegetable gardens and fruit trees and what is now a football ground was a hayfield, with a hay-stack. In the coach-house, by the Gallery Road entrance, there was a coach and horses to take Sir Evan and his family, on Sundays, across Dulwich Park to Emmanuel Church, Barry Road. The coach-house has now been made into flats but there is still an old pump outside which might have given the horses a drink.

Southwark Council leased *Belair* in 1946 for recreation and the grounds are always open to the public. The house was in a poor state after the war and had to be practically rebuilt. The Victorian additions were removed and it now looks, from the outside, almost as when it was new. The inside is modernized, as rooms are used for meetings, but through the glass of the front door you can see the elegant 18th-century staircase still going right up through the centre of the house.



Belair, Gallery Road, 1934

Dulwich is fortunate in having two fine old mansions. Both now belong to Southwark Borough Council. Not far from *Belair* is *Kingswood*. The best way to approach this house is through the gates in Kingswood Drive, when you see it ahead of you, looking much as it did when horses and carriages drove up to it through private grounds. Now all around you is the Kingswood Estate of flats, houses, shops and two big schools, all built on those grounds by the London County Council in the 1950s. The people who once lived at *Kingswood House* had everything they needed for use and pleasure, farmland, greenhouses for grapes and melons, gardens with fountains playing, a boating lake and a cave. They had their own carpenters' shops, in later years an electric laundry, and even their own railway station. A private path to Sydenham Hill Station had electric light which could be switched on from the house!

At first glance you might think *Kingswood House* was a baron's castle, hundreds of years old. Actually it was begun in 1811 by William Vizard, an eminent lawyer. A later owner, 1891-1900, was John Lawson Johnston, inventor of Bovril, who gave the house its present appearance and added the entrance porch and battlements. No wonder in his time *Kingswood* was known as 'Bovril Castle'. The last private owner was Lord Vestey.

Since 1954 *Kingswood* has been a library and community centre. The Great Hall, with its minstrels' gallery and open fireplace, is now the adult library. Gentlemen used to play billiards in what is now the junior library and children can sit and read in what was once the 'smokers' corner'. The gilt drawing room with its marble fireplace is used for concerts. Rooms upstairs have been named after people who lived there. The Vestey Room was Lady Vestey's bedroom. Mr Johnston was an admirer of the Jacobites and Bonnie Prince Charlie's portrait still hangs in the 'Culloden Room'.

Dulwich has many other interesting houses. These are still private residences but well worth looking at from the outside. One of the oldest is the *Old Blew House*, Dulwich Common. In his will Edward Alleyn left this house to the poor of the parish of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, though most of the present house dates from a rebuilding in 1776. *Bell House*, College Road, which is now a boarding-house for Dulwich College, was built in 1767 for Alderman Thomas Wright, who became Lord Mayor of London. *Glenlea*, designed by George Tappen, surveyor to Dulwich College, is one of the fine houses built on Dulwich Common after the Common was enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1805.

At the other end of Dulwich, is *Pond House*, Village Way, built in 1795. Once it had a round pond in front of the house. When the railway came, Half Moon Lane was realigned, so you have to walk round to the side of the house to see the fine entrance porch which used to face on to the road. Pond Mead Estate has been built in the grounds of the old house. *Lydenhurst*, across the road, is another early 18th-century house.

Some of the grandest mansions of the past are now no more. Only street-names remind you of two in West Dulwich. Park Hall Road takes its name from *Hall Place*, the old Dulwich manor house, demolished in 1880. Thurlow Park Road led to a mansion built in 1795 for Lord Thurlow, the Lord Chancellor. Casino Avenue, Herne Hill, marks the site of *Casino House*. Part of its beautiful grounds and lake, laid out by the famous landscape designer, Humphry Repton, now form Sunray Gardens. In the Old Burial Ground the biggest tomb is that of Richard Shawe, the wealthy solicitor who built *Casino* in 1796.

Higher up, on Denmark Hill, was the magnificent Victorian mansion of Sir Henry Bessemer, who is best remembered for inventing 'Bessemer Steel', a process for making very strong steel from cast iron, which was used for railway lines, ships, guns and bridges all over the world. *Bessemer House* was on the site of Blanchdowne and nearby was *Bessemer Grange*, Sir Henry's daughter's home. The estate stretched from Denmark Hill to Greendale and the railway line. It would have been an exciting place to explore as Bessemer was a man of many brilliant ideas, always experimenting. As well as a farm, the estate had an artificial lake with a model boat, as he was hoping to design a ship in which no one would be sea-sick. At the top of Greendale, there was an observatory with the world's second largest telescope; Bessemer was trying to find a way of using heat from the sun. Houses, flats, shops and Bessemer Grange School have all been built on Sir Henry Bessemer's estate.



Bessemer House and lake, c.1910

References and further reading

1. Dulwich Society – *'Kingswood'* 1985; *Belair*, 1986; *Bell House*, 1987
The first of a series of detailed booklets on Dulwich houses to be published by the Society.
2. Brian Green – *Around Dulwich* p. 17-20 and 27-31
3. W. H. Blanch – *Camberwell* p. 409-16
4. *Scenes from the Past Ser.1 no.12 Belair*
5. Patricia M. Jenkins – *The Story of Sir Henry Bessemer*, Herne Hill Soc; 1984.

8. DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY

Dulwich is famous, firstly for its College and secondly for its Picture Gallery, the oldest purpose-built public art gallery in England.

How is it that there is such a Gallery, set here amidst green lawns, instead of, like most public galleries, in a city centre? It is a strange story, concerning three people, Noel Desenfans, a picture dealer of French origin, his wife Margaret, and his friend Sir Francis Bourgeois, an artist. Their portraits are in the entrance to the Gallery. Desenfans had got together a large collection of pictures for Stanislas Augustus, King of Poland, but the king was forced to abdicate and Desenfans was left with the pictures on his hands. He offered them to the British government but they were not interested, perhaps because the country was then in the midst of wars with Napoleon. When he died, Desenfans left the paintings to Bourgeois and he, having friends at Dulwich College, bequeathed them to the College, on condition that they would be on show to the public. Margaret Desenfans, who was very wealthy, gave money to build the Picture Gallery. It was opened in 1817, twenty-one years before the National Gallery.

Dulwich Picture Gallery was designed by Sir John Soane, the outstanding architect of his day. It is the admiration of present-day architects working on similar projects. In Soane's day there was no electric light so he made sure the Gallery got as much light as possible from the sky-lights and design of the ceiling. Even now it does not normally have to use artificial light. After damage in World War II the Gallery was reconstructed using Soane's original plans, except for the entrance porch and extensions on the east side, which had been added in 1910. The Gallery has been redecorated in what are thought to have been Soane's original colours.

The tombs of the three founders are in the mausoleum at the centre of the Gallery. This may seem a strange idea to us, but not to an 18th-century gentleman, who liked to be buried in a mausoleum similar to those of ancient Rome. From Gallery Road, you can see the stone funerary urns and sarcophagi (coffins) on the roof of this part of the Gallery.

There are over six hundred paintings in the collection, about three hundred on display. Though most come from Desenfans and Bourgeois, a few hung in the Old College, long before their time. Portraits of Alleyn and his wife are from his own collection. The picture of Richard Burbage, famous actor of Alleyn's day, is one of those left to the College in 1686 by William Cartwright, another actor. Some pictures were given after the Gallery was opened, for example, portraits of the Linley family. The beautiful *Linley Sisters* and their father *Thomas Linley* are both by Gainsborough. One of their brothers, Ozias, was organist at the Old College. The quaint portrait of the future *Queen Victoria*, aged four, is by Stephen Denning who was then Keeper of the Gallery.

There are paintings by most of the great masters of the 17th and 18th centuries, notably the French and Dutch artists. Everyone has their own favourites. For many it is *A girl at a window* and two other portraits by Rembrandt. These fairly small pictures have been popular with thieves but are now all safely back on show in the Gallery. There is a lively painting by the Spanish artist, Murillo, of *Two Spanish peasant boys*, a portrait of *Charles I* by Van Dyck, *Venice* by Canaletto, and an unusual view of *Westminster and the Thames* in 1660 by a Flemish artist, Cornelius Bol. Some of the elegant furniture was once in the Desenfans' own home in Charlotte Street, Marylebone.

References and further reading

1. Giles Waterfield - *Dulwich Picture Gallery*
Illustrated booklet by the Keeper, on sale at the Gallery
2. Brian Green - *Dulwich Village* p.30-33
3. For more detailed study -
Peter Murray - *Dulwich Picture Gallery, a catalogue*, Sotheby Parke Benet 1980
Giles Waterfield - *Soane and after, the architecture of Dulwich Picture Gallery*, Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1987

9. WRITERS AND ARTISTS

'... the crowning glory of Herne Hill was that, after walking along its ridge southward from London, through a mile of chestnut, lilac and apple trees, hanging over the wooden palings on each side ... suddenly the trees stopped on the left, and out one came on the top of a field sloping down to the south into Dulwich valley ... open field animate with cow and buttercup and below the beautiful meadows and high avenues of Dulwich, and beyond, all that crescent of the Norwood hills'.

John Ruskin - *Praeterita*, Allen, 1890

John Ruskin, the great Victorian writer, thinker, artist and art critic, lived most of his long life on Herne Hill and Denmark Hill. A plaque in the front garden of the present No. 26 Herne Hill marks the site of his childhood home. Later the family lived at 163 Denmark Hill, a site now covered by council flats.

He loved the Dulwich neighbourhood, as it was in his boyhood, and wrote much about it in his later years. He remembered, for example, Croxted Lane, which was 'a green by-road ... separated by blackberry hedges from the better cared for meadows on each side of it ... a slender rivulet ... trickled ... through the long grass beneath the hedges, and expanded itself, into ... pools in which sundry curious little skipping shrimps, and any quantity of tadpoles ... offered themselves to my boyhood's pleased ... observation.' Ruskin said the first sketch in which he showed his talent for drawing was of the bridge over the Effra, at the foot of Herne Hill, before the little river was bricked over.

He learnt much from studying the great paintings in Dulwich Picture Gallery. Later, when he was lecturing at the Working Men's College, Camden Town, he used to bring his students sketching in Dulwich Woods. No doubt he would have been pleased that Ruskin Park, the green open space opposite his old home, has been named after him. Simpson's Alley, a path which took him into Dulwich, has been renamed Ruskin Walk. In St. Giles' Church, Camberwell, you can see the magnificent stained glass east window which Ruskin helped to design.

Robert Browning, the poet, also loved Dulwich, especially the Picture Gallery where he was taken, as a small boy, by his father. It was then, as he wrote later, 'a green half hour's walk' from his home in north Camberwell. It is said that some of his earliest poems were inspired by walks in Dulwich Woods.

Charles Dickens was another who knew Dulwich well, from his visits to the Dulwich Club. He liked it so much that he pictured his hero, Mr Pickwick, retiring to live here where, 'somewhat infirm now', he 'may still frequently be seen, contemplating the pictures in the Dulwich Gallery, or enjoying a walk about the pleasant neighbourhood'. People say Dickens had in mind the pretty little house in College Road, now called *Pickwick Cottage*, as Mr Pickwick's Dulwich home.

P.G. Wodehouse, creator of Jeeves and other comic characters was one of the many famous old boys of Dulwich College. He enjoyed his school days there, describing them as 'just six years of unbroken bliss'. Part of the College Library has been set up as a Wodehouse Memorial, with his typewriter, desk, pipe, books and manuscripts. Dulwich appears in his books as 'Valley Fields'. C. S. Forester, author of the *Hornblower* stories, went to Alleyn's and later to Dulwich College, and probably took his hero's name from that of an Alleyn old boy commemorated on the school's War Memorial.

Another author, Richard Church, who moved to Dulwich as a boy, described the move as 'being transplanted into Paradise'. In his autobiography, *Over the Bridge*, he wrote, 'I had come to the Land of Peace, and quiet purposes.' He particularly remembered his school days at Dulwich Hamlet where, 'I was to find an almost impossible happiness and to be set on the road to the only education which is of any value, self-education'. He lived at 2, Warmington Road.

Artists have also made their home in Dulwich. David Cox, the water-colourist, lived on Dulwich Common for about six years from 1808, probably at Pond Cottages, and painted local scenes. No. 10 Pond Cottages was the home of James Fitton R.A. for fifty years until his death in 1982. The French

impressionist artist, Camille Pissarro, lived at Westow Hill, Upper Norwood, 1870-71, and painted several interesting views of Dulwich. One is of Dulwich College, College Road, newly built, another of Lordship Lane railway station, now demolished, and a third of College Road, with St. Stephen's Church among the trees, looking almost as it does today.

References and further reading

1. Brian Green - *Around Dulwich* p. 15-18
2. *Dulwich; a collection of writings about the Village and the College*
3. Patricia M. Jenkyns - *The making of John Ruskin*, Herne Hill Soc; 1986.
4. *Ruskin and early Victorian Camberwell*, L.B. Southwark, 1981, Booklet with quotations about Dulwich.
For more detailed study see the Ruskin Collection at Local Studies Library.
5. *Charles Dickens and Southwark*, L.B. Southwark, 1980.
6. Nicholas Reed - *Camille Pissarro at the Crystal Palace*, London Reference Books, 1987.

10. THE LAST OF THE FARMS; DULWICH & EAST DULWICH

In the past Dulwich Village was surrounded by farms. Some survived even into the 20th-century. The largest farm near the centre of the village was *Dulwich Court*, records of which go back at least to 1573. The rent for part of it in 1724 included 'a good fat goose' at Michaelmas for the Master of Dulwich College! It was known in the 19th-century as Constable's Farm as it was owned for many years by Colonel Constable and then his son William Constable. Fortunately the land has never been built on. In Dulwich Park you are walking over what used to be the farmer's fields. Lines of old oak trees mark their boundaries. The farm house was in Court Lane, just south of the park gates.



Friern Manor Dairy Farm - the Great Meadow, 1853
From the Illustrated London News

The Grange, Grange Lane, is a beautiful old house that was reconstructed after World War II. Until the 1920s this too was a farmhouse. An old plan shows cowshed and dairy, stables and chicken house where now there are flower gardens. The farm fields have become the Dulwich and Sydenham Golf Course. Higher up towards the woods was Dulwich Wood Farm. In 1920 this still had ninety pigs, seven cows and two horses. An old advertisement for another farm on Dulwich Common, Parker's Potash Dairy Farm, reads, 'Pure rich milk supplied three times daily to all parts'. Cows which produced this milk grazed on what is now the Old Alleynian Cricket Field.

Until the mid 19th century East Dulwich was nearly all farms and market gardens. You can see this by looking at old maps, but it is not so easy to trace these farms on the ground as fields have generally been completely covered with streets. Only Goose Green which was always common land, part of Peckham Rye, is still an open space. In the past there were two ponds at the east end, and at the other end, near Lordship Lane, a pound for stray animals. In 1905, in his memoirs of *Dulwich past and present*, Walter Greening wrote of Goose Green, 'When I first knew it there were only a few scattered cottages and a farm house, the only occupants of the Green being the geese belonging to the cottagers'. A writer in 1874 recalled the geese and also the donkeys of a Mrs Dench 'the delight of children for the rides and pleasure they afforded'. A map of 1862 marks *Plaget Hall Farm* about where St. John's Vicarage now stands.

For generations the Baily family were big landowners and farmers, mainly west of Lordship Lane. The burial registers of St. Giles, Camberwell, record the burial on 21st February 1768 of 'a woman found drowned in a field belonging to Farmer Baily'. East Dulwich Grove was once Baily's Grove, a footpath through the fields of Farmer Baily.

Before railways or motor transport, perishable food could not be carried long distances. Until it became built up, East Dulwich supplied fresh vegetables and milk for inner London. The Gardens, Peckham Rye, was not then a residential square, but market gardens. On the site of Gordon's Garage, East Dulwich Road, was the Rectory Nursery, earlier the Rectory Farm. There was a nursery in Grove Vale until the school was built there in 1900.

An article in the *Illustrated London News* of 1853 describes Friern Manor Dairy Farm as, 'one of the largest dairy farms in the metropolis'. It supplied milk which was taken twice daily to the City and the West End. It had 186 cows, which were kept in large, clean sheds and turned out in warm weather to graze in the Great Meadow, between what is now Overhill Road and Friern Road.

References and further reading

1. Brian Green – *Dulwich Village* p. 34
2. *Illustrated London News*, 11th June 1853
3. W. H. Blanch – *Camberwell* p. 354

4. Reproductions of old maps include
J Dewhirst - *Parish of St Giles, Camberwell 1842*, Camberwell Soc; 1971
Old Ordnance Survey Maps; Dulwich Village 1913; East Dulwich and Peckham Rye 1868; East Dulwich and Peckham Rye 1914; Brixton and Herne Hill 1870; Streatham Hill & Tulse Hill 1879; Crystal Palace 1871;
publ: by Alan Godfrey
5. Walter Greening - *Dulwich past and present*. Unpublished M.S., 1905.
In Local Studies Library.

11. THE AGE OF THE TRAIN

Many Dulwich residents travel daily into town by train. No one is far from a station; East Dulwich, North Dulwich, West Dulwich, Sydenham Hill, Crystal Palace, Herne Hill. Amazingly, all these stations and the railway lines which serve them were built in the short space of fourteen years. Between 1854 and 1868, long before the days of British Rail, various railway companies cut through the quiet woods and fields, bridged the roads, and totally transformed the appearance and life of Dulwich. How did it all begin? Well, in 1854 the Crystal Palace was moved from Hyde Park and re-erected on Sydenham Hill. The very first railway in Dulwich was built not to take people into London to work but to bring them for a day's outing to all the attractions of the Palace. The London Brighton and South Coast Railway Company opened Crystal Palace Station in 1856. Trains from London Bridge and later Victoria brought to it some of the two million people who in its heyday visited Crystal Palace each year. The station is still in use though Crystal Palace burnt down in a great fire in 1936.

There is also a 'lost' railway which once went to the Crystal Palace. It was built, in 1865, by a rival railway company, the London Chatham and Dover. This line closed nearly forty years ago and its station, the Crystal Palace High Level Station, has been demolished, but you can still follow where the trains once ran. Part of the line is a nature trail in Horniman's Gardens. The railway bridge by which it crossed Lordship Lane, and Lordship Lane Station, have both gone but a continuation of the line ran through the deep cutting, now completely overgrown, near the top of Cox's Walk. Standing on the footbridge from which Pissarro painted the station, you can hardly imagine the smoke and noise of steam engines which once disturbed this quiet wood.

Soon railways were built and used, not just for pleasure outings, but mainly to take commuters into London to work. By 1862 you could catch a train at Herne Hill to the Elephant and Castle and soon after to Blackfriars and the City. West Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Stations opened in 1863. Incidentally, Penge Tunnel, one and a quarter miles long, which takes the line south from Sydenham Hill, right under the Crystal Palace, is lined with bricks, made on the spot, on the Kingswood Estate, from clay excavated when constructing the tunnel. East Dulwich and North Dulwich Stations, for trains to London Bridge, opened in 1868. North Dulwich still has its elegant Victorian station, designed by Charles Barry, architect of Dulwich College. Notice, too, the viaducts and bridges also designed by him, obviously for ornament as well as use. The letters A.C. (Alleyn's College) show they are on Dulwich College land. There are good examples in Red Post Hill, Green Dale and Village Way.

The coming of the railways meant that people could live farther from their work. Everywhere houses were built near the stations. Dulwich Village High Street remained little changed, except for additional houses, but soon the whole surrounding area, East Dulwich, North Dulwich, West Dulwich, Sydenham Hill and Herne Hill was covered with streets instead of fields. It became part of Greater London.

Many people who came to live here must have been delighted with their new houses, away from the crowded inner city. Older residents, notably John Ruskin, were not so pleased. He was particularly upset by the changes to his beloved Croxted Lane. 'No existing terms of language', he wrote, 'are enough to describe the forms of filth, and modes of ruin . . . along Croxted Lane. The fields on each side of it are mostly dug up for building, or cut through . . . by the wild crossings and concurrences of three railroads.' Where the road was already made up with 'houses of extreme respectability' he was especially sorry for the children. No tadpoles, nothing for them to study but 'gravel and gas-lamp posts.' No wonder in 1872 he moved away to the Lake District!

References and further reading

1. H. J. Dyos - *Victorian Suburb*, Leicester Univ: Press, 1961, pp. 67-77
2. W. Darby - *Dulwich a place in history*, p.73
3. *Horniman Gardens Nature Trails; Railway Trail*, GLC. Horniman's Museum.
Sydenham Hill Wood Nature Trail, London Wildlife Trust
4. *Old Ordnance Survey Maps*.
These mark railway lines with companies which built them.
5. Graham Reeves - *Palace of the people*, Bromley Library Service, 1986
For more detailed study -
6. Patrick Beaver - *The Crystal Palace*, Phillimore, 1986
7. C. F. Dendy Marshall - *A History of the Southern Railway*, rev. ed. Ian Allan, 1963

12. VICTORIAN DULWICH - THE COLLEGE ESTATES

Much of Dulwich as we know it today was laid out or built in the reign of Queen Victoria. During this period first Sir Charles Barry, and then his son, known as Charles Barry junior, held the post of Architect and Surveyor to Dulwich College. The two Barrys left their mark everywhere in Dulwich but especially on the old and new College buildings. Sir Charles Barry, architect of the Houses of Parliament, designed the charming Old Grammar School, in a style rather like a Tudor building. The Old College looks as it does today thanks to Charles Barry junior, who added the cloisters and steeple. But Charles Barry's most famous achievement, the grandest of all Dulwich's Victorian buildings, is, of course, Dulwich College, College Road.

The College Estates had gained a large amount of money from the sale of land to the railways, when they constructed their lines through Dulwich. Barry was therefore able to make the new College as magnificent as he wished. He put into it ideas from various places. The general style, the campanile or bell-tower, and the terra-cotta decorations on the exterior, are modelled on North Italian palaces and cathedrals he had visited. The Great Hall resembles the medieval Westminster Hall which he had helped his father to restore.

As Dulwich spread out beyond the old village, following the arrival of the railways, it was Charles Barry who was responsible for planning the development. Blanch, the Camberwell historian, wrote in 1875, 'either from his designs or under his supervision have been erected those numerous mansions and villas which (much to the advantage of college revenues) have in a few years, converted the quiet woodlands of Dulwich into a busy, though still pretty, and even rural, suburb of the great metropolis'.

The grandest Victorian mansions were mostly built south of Dulwich Village, leading up to the heights of Sydenham Hill. The 'folks who lived on the hill' in the days before the motor car, were business magnates who used the new railways to travel into the City. To gentlemen such as these 'the Englishman's home, was his castle' - or the next best thing. 'Castlebar' is the name of one of the extraordinary houses still standing on Sydenham Hill! Now a Lewisham Old People's home, it was once the private residence of Mr Lazenby, head of a well-known pickle firm of that name. Nor far away, of course, was 'Bovril Castle'.



Dulwich College, College Road, c.1920

Other houses to look out for include Nos 34-36 Sydenham Hill and *Athol House*, 138 College Road, now a Cheshire Home for disabled people. *Brightlands*, Gallery Road, which now belongs to Dulwich College Preparatory School, was one of the 'mansions' designed by Barry himself.

Once there were many more large houses like these. Barry's own house on Sydenham Hill, *Lapsewood*, is one of those which have been demolished. A modern housing estate has been built on the site of *Woodhall*, College Road, once the home of Mr Eno of Eno's Fruit Salts. Some houses that were built, lived in and demolished within the last hundred years have left less trace than ancient Roman villas. Overgrown hollows in the woods of Farquhar Road are the sites of basement kitchens where 'cook' once prepared the meals for the family 'upstairs'. Gardens have gone back to the wild, the only signs of them being cultivated species, such as rhododendrons and a monkey puzzle tree, among the ancient forest trees of Dulwich Woods.

More ordinary streets, planned and laid out to the boundaries of the Dulwich College estates, still have many of their original, good-class Victorian houses, built in accordance with College leases which would not allow cheap or poor quality housing. Nos. 24-28 Dulwich Wood Avenue are some of the 'villas' designed by Barry himself. Park Hall Road, Alleyn Road and Alleyn Park were laid out at this time on land which had belonged to one big house, Hall Place. Some streets on Herne Hill between Ruskin Walk, Danecroft Road and Ardborg Road, not on the College Estates, look very much alike, as they were all built at the same time 1890-1910, in the grounds of another demolished mansion, *Dulwich House*, Red Post Hill.

Nearly all the churches in Dulwich were built, or founded, in Victorian times, for the residents of the new houses. The oldest is St. Paul's, Herne Hill. This district, on a main road to London, was popular with prosperous businessmen even before the railway came. John Ruskin's father, for example, was a City wine-merchant. St Paul's was first erected in 1844 but rebuilt, after a fire in 1858, by the well-known church architect, G. E. Street. Ruskin described it as 'one of the loveliest churches of the kind in the country and one that makes the fire a matter of rejoicing'. Look out for his memorial in the church. There is also a memorial to Captain James Horsburgh, navigator and hydrographer; with a stone carving of the sailing ship in which he charted the oceans. He lived on Herne Hill and is buried in the Old Burial Ground.

Charles Barry designed two important Dulwich churches, St. Stephen's, College Road and St. Peter's, Lordship Lane. Like most Victorian churches they are in the Gothic style of architecture, with tall spires and pointed arches, similar to much older churches of the Middle Ages. Try to see inside these magnificent buildings, and indeed all the churches. St. Stephen's has wall paintings by the artist, Sir Edward Poynter, of the trial and stoning of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. St. Peter's, where Barry himself worshipped, has been beautifully restored by the Roman Catholic monks who now live at the former vicarage.

St. Barnabas', Calton Avenue, was built in 1894 as the parish church for Dulwich Village. The red brick tower was added in 1908. Inside, notice the woodcarving, done by local people. The church has been adapted for social work on weekdays as well as worship on Sundays. Herne Hill Baptist Church was built in 1906. Read the foundation stones on this, and other churches, to find out more about the builders.

The older Dulwich school buildings are Victorian, including, as well as Dulwich College, Alleyn's and James Allen's Girls School. Dulwich College Preparatory School was founded in 1885 and Dulwich Hamlet in 1884. Dulwich Village Church of England Infants' School has a longer history. It began as part of James Allen's first school at the French Horn Inn. In 1865 Dulwich people subscribed to build a new infants' school in Turney Road. Now the school has modern buildings in Dulwich Village.

Dulwich Library, Lordship Lane, opened in 1897, was one of the last buildings by Charles Barry. As always he added interesting details. As you go in look up at the quill pens and open book above the doorway.

References and further reading

1. Brian Green - *Victorian and Edwardian Dulwich*, Barracuda Books Ltd., 1988.
2. Jan Piggott - *Charles Barry, junior, and the Dulwich College Estate*, Dulwich Picture Gallery 1986
3. W. H. Blanch - *Camberwell*, pp. 416-418
4. B. Cherry and N. Pevsner - *London 2: South* pp. 613-625
5. H. J. Dyos - *Victorian suburb* p. 99-100
6. James A. Heathcote ed - *The Platanes, a history of King's College Hall*, King's College, 1979.
A late Victorian Mansion on Champion Hill, formerly a private residence.
7. Doris E. Pullen - *Dulwich*, publ. privately, 1983, pp. 10-37
Recollections of some local people.
8. Patricia M. Jenkyns - *A glance at the history of Herne Hill*, Herne Hill Society, 1986
9. Adrian Prockter - *Forest Hill and Sydenham*, London Reference Books, 1987
10. Ken Vernon - *All Saints Church 1888-1988*, publ. privately, 1989

13. EAST DULWICH TAKES SHAPE

East Dulwich never had a village High Street like Dulwich Village. It grew from a collection of farms. Some 'town-houses' began to appear along its few roads in the early 19th century. The oldest are probably those facing Peckham Rye. Over Nos. 152-158 you can still read the old name *Prospect Place*. This terrace is marked on a map of 1842. People who lived in houses such as these, when they were new, could have kept their own horse and carriage. Several, for example, No. 162, have low buildings at the side which were once stables. Early residents could also have gone to town by horse-bus. In 1835, Mr Prince, who had earlier been a coach-driver, started running horse-buses from the King's Arms. 'Rosedale', Nos. 112-114 Lordship Lane, Nos. 31-33 East Dulwich Grove, and Nos. 15-27 Crystal Palace Road are other houses, built when all around was still fields. There was plenty of room then for long gardens. Several houses, and the school in Adys Road, have been built in what was once the grounds of *Walnut Tree Villa*, the house which is now St. John's Vicarage.

It was the coming of the railway that completely changed East Dulwich. This was when it was really built up and took shape. As you can see, just by comparing old maps, nearly all its streets were laid out between about 1865 and 1885. The same streets are there today and the streets are mostly lined with the same houses, unlike many parts of London where streets like these have been swept away to build big housing estates. East Dulwich is an almost perfect example of a 'Victorian suburb'.

In 1865 the old Friern Manor Farm was bought by property developers, the British Land Company. The manor house was demolished and the fields divided into two hundred lots and sold for building. All the streets between Wood Vale, Lordship Lane and Barry Road were built on the old farmlands. Barry Road was the boundary between Friern and another old estate which stretched from the Plough to Goose Green. This belonged to Sir William Bowyer-Smyth whose ancestors had been Lords of the Manor of Camberwell from the 16th century. In 1866 this too was sold and on it were built the small streets between Barry Road and Lordship Lane. Before the streets were numbered, houses, or groups of houses, had names. You can see these names high up on the front of some of the houses, together with the dates the houses were built.



Dog Kennel Hill, c.1912

To the west of Lordship Lane there is a group of streets which look very much alike because they were all built by one builder, E. J. Bailey. As he came from Derbyshire he named them after Derbyshire villages and rivers, Melbourne Grove, Derwent Grove, Chesterfield Grove. Mr Bailey was also landlord of the *Lord Palmerston* pub in Lordship Lane, named after the famous statesman who died in 1865. (Notice his head sticking out from above an upper window!)

Big older houses, such as you still see in Dulwich Village, were swept away to provide even more land for building. The whole of Worlingham Road was built on what had been the gardens of Norland House. The house itself was replaced first by a church and now by *St. James' Cloister*, housing for elderly people.

The builders of East Dulwich did not have far to go for bricks made of local clay. Before the streets were built there was a brickfield in Lordship Lane, between Northcross Road and Whately Road. To the south was Dawson's Patent Tile and Brick Factory. With its tall chimney it was as noticeable on the skyline as the Dawson's Heights flats are today. There was never much other industry. East Dulwich has kept quite well to the agreements, made when building began, that the land should only be used for dwelling-houses. 'Offensive trades . . . tan-pits, factories, steam-engines and gasometers', were strictly forbidden.

Until you explore East Dulwich, looking at details, you might think that streets built much about the same time would be all boringly alike. In fact their various builders each had their individual ideas. The simple two-storey houses of Nutfield Road and Frogley road were some of the first houses to be built on the Bowyer-Smyth estate. A few years later most builders show the Victorian love of ornament. In Friern Road, for example, notice the Classical style columns supporting bay windows and porches, and the leaves, ferns, flowers and all sorts of strange heads above the doorways. Upland Road has pretty canopies in front of some houses. Oakhurst Grove has taller houses and a quite extraordinary roof-line.

Some residents who moved in when the houses were new were obviously better off than others. Some streets have grander houses, for example, Wood Vale, Overhill Road and Underhill Road. An end house in Wood Vale has a tower rather like a church. Even the *Rockbank Hotel*, Overhill Road, was once a private house. In the early days large houses, for example those in The Gardens, now divided into flats, would each have been the home of one family, with living-in servants.

During all the building up of East Dulwich, one main route to Goose Green remained unchanged. In 1900 Dog Kennel Hill was still just a country lane bordered by hawthorn hedges, with no public transport. The last big change to East Dulwich came in 1906 when this road was widened for electric trams. To avoid possible accidents, caused by trams slipping on this steep hill, four parallel tracks were laid, so that two trams were never on the same line. As older people remember, special trams were used, 'H.R.2's', designed for 'hilly routes'. From Dog Kennel Hill the tramlines continued along East Dulwich Road, which had already been widened, to Peckham Rye East, and up Lordship Lane to Forest Hill. In 1952 trams were abolished throughout London and the tramlines were removed. The 184 bus replaced the 84 tram, the 185 replaced the 58 and the 176 the 62.

References and further reading

1. H. J. Dyos - *Victorian suburb* pp. 117-122, and map
2. W. H. Blanch - *Camberwell* p. 354-5
3. Maps -
J. Dewhirst - *Camberwell* 1842
Old Ordnance Survey Maps - East Dulwich and Peckham Rye 1868 & 1914; Dulwich Village 1913
4. London County Council - *London Tramways Guide*, 1911.
Copy in Local Studies Library
5. *Good and bad old days of childhood, contributed by some East Dulwich people*, unpubl. typescript, 1976.
Further recording of older residents' memories would be useful
6. *Census returns, 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871 & 1881*
On microfilm. These list all residents at each house
7. Brian Green - *Victorian and Edwardian Dulwich*, pp. 25-39, 52-65, 101-4, 124-8

14. CHURCHES AND OTHER IMPORTANT BUILDINGS OF EAST DULWICH

The first church to be built in the whole Dulwich neighbourhood, after the Old College Chapel, was the East Dulwich Chapel, a small building, long since demolished, in Lordship Lane, opposite Goose Green. It was provided in 1827, on his own land, by Thomas Farmer Baily, farmer and landowner, for the benefit of his tenants and neighbours. As fields turned to streets, the congregation grew and needed a bigger church. They moved, in 1865, to a new church on a new site, St. John the Evangelist, Goose Green. This is now the oldest church in East Dulwich. The architect was Charles Baily, another of the old East Dulwich family. It was partly rebuilt after World War II but still, as Blanch wrote in 1875, 'reminds us, in its style, of antique village churches, - in many a picturesque spot in Surrey, Sussex or Kent'.

St. Clement's Friern Road, is a modern church. The old St. Clement's, destroyed in World War II, was built in 1885. At first it was a mission church of St. John's for the new streets south of Goose Green. If you walk up Barry Road, ahead of you all the way is the tall spire of a typical Victorian church. It used to be called Emmanuel but changes have taken place. The church has been converted to a Christian nursing home. The church hall is now the new 'Christ Church United Reformed and Methodist Church Centre'. Dorothy Charrington House, Barry Road, was built on the site of the Methodists' old church.



*St. John's Goose Green, c.1865
From a watercolour*

The redbrick Dulwich Grove United Reform Church, East Dulwich Grove, was built in 1890. The extra buildings at this and other churches were needed when nearly all children went to Sunday School. In 1892 there were 408 children on the Dulwich Grove Register. There are three Baptist churches in East Dulwich. Lordship Lane was built in 1873, Barry Road and Amott Road were both rebuilt after the war.

The Roman Catholics' first place of worship, in 1879, was a big old house in Lordship Lane, called *Five Elms*, with an orchard at the back in what is now Bassano Street. St. Thomas More Church, next to Dulwich Library, opened in 1929. On the sanctuary ceiling are symbols representing the saint, his mace as Lord Chancellor and the axe by which he was beheaded under King Henry VIII. The gates have the Greek letters, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

The earliest schools were often started by churches. St. John's, the oldest school in East Dulwich, was founded about 1830 by Thomas Baily at his East Dulwich Chapel. In 1839-1872 it was at Troy Town, Peckham Rye. Since 1872 the school has been in Northcross Road. A Catholic school opened near *Five Elms* in 1883. The building is now St. Thomas More Hall as, in 1965, St. Anthony's School moved to Etherow Street.

After the Education Act of 1870 many schools were built by the London School Board. Grove Vale, Heber, Goodrich and Friern (now part of Waverley School) were all 'Board Schools', as you can see by the plaques high up on the outside walls with the letters LSB and the date the school was built. In the early days these schools were for children up to fourteen, the school leaving age. There were separate departments for infants, girls and boys, usually on three floors, with separate entrances, as, for example, at Grove Vale.

When 'inner London' was already crowded there was still plenty of open land in East Dulwich. That is why, in 1854, the Camberwell Vestry bought land here for a cemetery, the Camberwell Old Cemetery in Forest Hill road. For the same reason East Dulwich had various 'institutions' for the poor of more crowded areas. Two huge buildings which were originally 'Poor Law Institutions' now house Dulwich Hospital, 'Dulwich South' in East Dulwich Grove and 'Dulwich North', formerly St Francis', in St Francis Road. Even for the poor, Victorian architects liked grand buildings. Just look up at the towers of Dulwich South!

This building opened in 1887 as an infirmary for the sick poor of north Southwark, an extension to the workhouse in Westmoreland Road, Walworth. You can still see, on the entrance lodge, the letters S.S.U., St Saviour's Union, the Poor Law district to which it originally belonged. The 'institution' in what is now St Francis Road, was built in 1894 for 'the aged and infirm of good character' of Camberwell. In the very early years old people who were fit to work could earn a shilling (5p) a week and extra food by doing carpentry, growing vegetables, or looking after pigs in the grounds. The Poor Law came to an end in 1930. Since 1948 both hospitals have been part of the National Health Service. Inside they are totally altered and modernized. Dulwich North is noted for rehabilitation work with old people and has some new buildings, including Hamlet House for young disabled.

In the past, as well as 'infirmaries', East Dulwich had various homes for poor children from other parts. In 1881 the Church of England Children's Society opened its first home for 'waifs and strays', as they were then called, at 308 Friern Road. The Society's later home, now demolished, was in Overhill Road. From 1885 to 1923, No.27 Barry Road was 'The Orphanage of the Infant Saviour' for little girls. Poor children from Bermondsey were housed at 180-182 Peckham Rye.

Finally, two other important buildings in East Dulwich. One is typically Victorian, Dulwich Baths, opened in 1892. Notice its clock-tower. The other is modern, the Police Station in Lordship Lane built in 1977. The earlier Police Station was a converted private house, 97 Crystal Palace Road. Police horses have stables in Lordship Lane and are often to be seen exercising around East Dulwich.

References and further reading

1. W. H. Blanch - *Camberwell* chap. 11
2. H. J. Dyos - *Victorian Suburb*. Index has many references to churches
3. Booklets on individual churches include -
 - W. J. A. Hahn - *St John the Evangelist, East Dulwich, 1865-1951*, publ. privately, 1951
 - Norman Singleton - *The Dulwich Grove Story 1879-1969*, publ. privately, 1969
 - Michael Smith - *The Dulwich Catholics 1879-1973*, publ. privately, 1969
 - Donald Strudwick - *St Clement's, East Dulwich 1885-1985*, publ. privately, 1985

15. DULWICH IN TWO WORLD WARS

In the centre of the Old College courtyard is a stone memorial to the men of the Alleyn Foundation who served and died in the 'Great War', 1914-18. Inside the Old College Chapel, the walls are lined with the names of those who died in two World Wars, 1914-18 and 1939-45.

Many local men belonged to Camberwell's own volunteer regiment, the First Surrey Rifles, or 21st County of London Regiment. On 15th September 1916, with immense courage, they attacked a line of German forts at High Wood in Belgium. By the next morning, of the 550 men and 19 officers who had set out, only 60 men and 2 officers returned to camp. The High Wood Barracks in Lordship Lane is named after this battle. Enormous numbers were wounded in the Great War. Dulwich Hospital became 'Southwark Military Hospital,' full of wounded soldiers. Recruits drilled on Goose Green to take their places at 'the Front'. Kingswood House was a convalescent home for Canadian forces.

In World War II, Dulwich itself was under attack. School children were evacuated to what it was hoped would be safer areas. Dulwich College Preparatory School, for example, went first to Cranbrook, Kent and later to North Wales. Their headmaster, Mr Leahey, wrote a book about their adventures.

Dulwich was hit many times by high-explosive and incendiary bombs, land-mines, flying bombs and rockets. Barrage balloons, put up as defence, were based in Townley Road and Herne Hill Stadium and anti-aircraft guns at 'the Fort', Grange Lane. 1940, the year of the London blitz, was especially bad. People spent their nights in the shelters. One near Dulwich Infants' School was at one time 'so crowded they had to take turns to sit down'. Even in a shelter people were not safe from a direct hit. In September 1940, a bomb on a Dog Kennel Hill shelter killed 37 people. On a Saturday morning in 1944 a flying-bomb landed on the Co-op in Lordship Lane, killing or wounding many people doing their weekend shopping. The Constitutional Club, 33 East Dulwich Grove, was one of the wartime 'rest centres', for people who had been bombed out and lost their homes. Dulwich Picture Gallery was badly damaged by a flying-bomb, though, fortunately, the pictures had been sent for safe-keeping to Wales. A.R.P. (Air Raid Precautions) Posts were set up, each covering a group of streets. George Brown, a historian of Dulwich, was Warden in charge of the team at Post 60 in Burbage Road. Just after the war he described Dulwich as so badly bombed that, 'today parts of this ancient village are reminiscent of the battlefields of France in the last war' (ie 1914-18).

It is now known that Dulwich was also a centre for secret operations. In World War II, Holland, like most of Europe, was under enemy occupation. A plaque on the outside of *Glenlea*, Dulwich Common, records that it was leased by the Dutch government-in-exile as a centre for housing secret agents. After training, these very brave young men were parachuted into Holland to make radio contact between Britain and the Dutch resistance. Many died. One, happily, returned after the war to marry the girl from James Allen's School with whom he had fallen in love during those tense months in Dulwich.

Less pleasant to remember is the fascist and arch-traitor, William Joyce, known as 'Lord Haw Haw' from the sound of his voice when he made propaganda broadcasts from Germany. He lived, for a time, before the war, in Alison Grove. At least no-one has to live in his old house – it was one of those that Hitler destroyed!

References and further reading

1. Brian Green – *Around Dulwich* pp. 53-57, 65-67
2. William Darby – *Dulwich a place in history*. See air-raids, defence, evacuation, George Cross, Victoria Cross, Zeppelin
3. J. H. Leakey – *School errant*, Dulwich College Preparatory School, 1951
4. *Civilian war dead 1939-45; Camberwell*, Imperial War Graves Commission, 1954
5. George Brown ed – *Warden's Post*, pamphlet publ. privately, 1946
6. For further research –
Records of A.R.P. Post 60 Southwark Archives 1983/251
Camberwell Incidents Registers Southwark Archives 5917, 5918, 5934

16. DULWICH TODAY

If you enter the Dulwich neighbourhood from almost any direction you pass first, on the outskirts, houses of the 20th century. Court Lane, which had been just a country lane, began to be built up about 1910. 'Homes fit for heroes' was the slogan, after World War I, which inspired the builders of the Sunray Estate, Herne Hill. Its houses are like country cottages built amid grass and trees and it has been designated as 'an area of special architectural character'.

After World War II large numbers of new homes were needed. Many were built by the borough or county council, for example the Bessemer, Denmark Hill, Kingswood, and Sydenham Hill estates of the 1950's and '60's. These all include fairly tall blocks of flats. Recently, however, the tide has turned. The latest council houses, in Darrell Road and Hindman's Road are only one and two storey and you could easily imagine they were built at the same period as their Victorian neighbours. There has also been much building by private developers, especially to the south of Dulwich, penetrating Dulwich Woods with estates such as Wood Hall, College Road. Hambledon Place, Dulwich Common, is a very high-class housing development. The Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, bought one of these houses when first built.

As some link with the past, names of new developments are often taken from Dulwich history. Because the kennels of the Surrey Hunt were once on Dog Kennel Hill roads on this estate, built in the 1930's, have names of famous hunts, Albrighton, Pytchley and Quorn. Flats on Sydenham Hill, Dunton, Attleborough, Bromley and Parfew, are named after abbots of 8ermondsey Abbey, which owned Dulwich in the Middle Ages. Sometimes the only reminder of a now vanished mansion is the street name on the site, *Adon Mount*, Mount Adon Park, was the home of James Henderson, founder of the *South London Press*. *Eastlands*, gave its name to Eastlands Crescent and *Alison Towers* to Allison Grove. Famous local people are also commemorated. A blue plaque on 3 Crescent Wood Road reminds you that John Logie Baird, television pioneer, lived there 1934-46. Baird Gardens is named after him. Some of the earliest BBC television transmissions were made, not far away, from one of the twin towers of the Crystal Palace. A pub in Bowen Drive is named *Sir Ernest Shackleton*, after the famous Antarctic explorer who was an old boy of Dulwich College. An estate in East Dulwich Grove has names connected with Deventer, Southwark's 'twin-town' in Holland.

Several churches have been built since World War II. St Faith's, Red Post Hill, erected 1958, is a church of unusual design with a Lady Chapel which can be seen through an open screen behind the altar. The church hall has been converted into a youth and community centre. Herne Hill United Reformed and Methodist Church, Red Post Hill, was rebuilt after the war. Kingswood has a new Roman Catholic Church, St Margaret Clitherow. 8oth Herne Hill and Kingswood have modern schools; Bessemer Grange and Langbourne primary schools, and two of the first big comprehensives to be built in London, William Penn and Kingsdale.

Happily, in spite of much development, especially in recent years, Dulwich is still a very green place. Even East Dulwich has its Goose Green, and sports fields on Dog Kennel Hill, and its boundary is the wide open space of Peckham Rye. Dulwich Village, with its grass verges is like a green island surrounded by green, especially when the horse chestnuts which line the streets are in bloom. It is said they were planted originally by James Allen. Fortunately they mostly weathered the terrible storm of October 16th, 1987, though sadly the great cedar of Lebanon which had stood for many years in the Old College garden, has had to be replaced by a younger tree.

Around the village centre there are still fields, now used as pleasure and sports grounds. The clubs that play on them have histories of their own. The Dulwich Cricket Club, Turney Road, goes back to 1867, the Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Golf Club, Grange Lane, to 1893. Dulwich Hamlet Football Club was founded in 1893 by old boys of the Hamlet School. Herne Hill Stadium cycling track opened in 1892.

In 1895 the Dulwich College Estates gave the old 'Five Fields' of Dulwich Court Farm, and other land, to be laid out by the Metropolitan Board of Works, forerunner of the London County Council, as Dulwich Park. The old stone bridge still has the coat of arms of the 'M.8.W.' Ducks swim on the same lake and you can have tea in the same tea-room as when the park was opened by Lord Rosebery, Chairman of the L.C.C., in 1890. One of the gates is named after him and another after Queen Mary, who came every year to see the magnificent rhododendrons. In the park there are old English oaks and also rare trees from other lands.



Dulwich Park, c.1905

Looking south, beyond the Park and the playing fields, the skyline is still crowned with trees, the remains of the ancient forest. Thanks to the efforts of conservation groups parts of Dulwich Woods are now being especially well cared for and made open to the public.

Dulwich has never had a separate local government. From early times it was part of the parish, and later of the borough of Camberwell. Since 1965 it has been a part, the most rural part, of the London Borough of Southwark. Yet Dulwich is, and always has been very much a community of its own. Local societies flourish, especially in Dulwich Village. Two amenity societies, the Dulwich Society and the East Dulwich Society, keep a watchful eye on developments. Dulwich Village, with its Old College, Georgian houses, Picture Gallery and Park attracts many visitors. For the rest, the whole neighbourhood is a place to live in. It has open space, good schools and streets and houses built generally to a scale and style that its residents, often newcomers, enjoy. No wonder Dulwich is well-loved both by visitors and by those who call it home.

References and further reading

1. Brian Green - *Around Dulwich* p. 69-72, Glossary of road names
2. William Darby - *Dulwich a place in history*, p.89
3. Greater London Council - *Dulwich Park 1885-1985*. Illustrated pamphlet.
4. *History of Dulwich Hamlet Football Club, 1893-1967*, publ. privately
Dulwich Cricket Club Centenary, 1867-1967, publ. privately
5. *Map of the Estate*, Estates Governors of Alleyn's College of God's Gift in Dulwich, 1987

This book was produced by the London Borough of Southwark Local Studies Library, Librarian, Nicola Smith, Archivist, Stephen Humphrey.

Text by Mary Boast.

Illustrations are from photographs and prints in the Local Studies Library.

Published by the Council of the London Borough of Southwark, 1990.

First published 1976. Enlarged and re-written 1990.

Printed by Express Print, 51 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3TY, 1990.

London Borough of Southwark Neighbourhood Histories
already published:

1. The Story of Camberwell.
2. The Story of Dulwich.
3. The Story of Peckham.
4. The Story of Walworth.
5. The Story of Bermondsey.
6. The Story of Rotherhithe.
7. The Story of 'The Borough'.
8. The Story of Bankside.

